MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Preparing World-Class Students

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TO: Members of the Maryland State Board of Education

FROM: Bernard J. Sadusky, Ed.D.

DATE: October 25, 2011

SUBJECT: 2012 Departmental Legislation

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this item is to give an overview of the process and procedures used by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) in submitting departmental legislation to the Governor's Legislation office. Also, a brief description of the departmental issues that will be proposed before the 2012 session of the Maryland General Assembly will be presented.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

I have asked Ms. Renee Spence to briefly update the members of the State Board of Education on the following departmental proposals:

Master Plan Update

This Departmental Bill is a response to local school systems requests to revise the master plan submission date, in order to facilitate their development of new master plans that are aligned with changing federal expectations. This bill delays the master plan submission date to October 2015 and allows local school systems to continue using yearly updates.

The revised master plan submission date will position local school systems to be responsive to new federal mandates, relating to the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Race to the Top requirements, and Common Core assessments. By 2015, the Race to the Top requirements will be fully implemented. Maryland will have also implemented a new curriculum with adopted Common Core Standards. Accompanying Common Core assessments will be administered in the spring of 2015. This new submission date is intended to facilitate the alignment of State expectations with federal goals for improving student achievement. This will help to ensure that all systems - local, state, and federal - are working in concert in support of student learning.

Requirements for Criminal Background Checks

The Department is seeking to add stronger protections for the health and safety of one of our most vulnerable populations – children. By adding the requirement that informal child care providers receive criminal background checks, we are adding an extra layer of protection for children who are not in regulated child care and are cared for by a family member, neighbor or friend in their own home, or a relative's home.

Other than the requirement that the informal child care provider has a child protective services check and that they sign a health and safety form, the Department has no regulatory authority over these providers. However, we use federal child care development funds to pay them. The Department would like to add the extra security of a criminal background check for these providers.

Family Day Care

The Maryland State Department of Education is committed to improving the quality of care and providing for the health and safety of children in child care settings across the State as well as ensuring that children enter school ready to learn.

The majority of amendments proposed by this legislation simply align all of Maryland Statute with SB 925, from the 2011 session. Changing Day Care terminology to be child centered and to more accurately reflect the national nomenclature pertaining to child care.